

South East Asia Command Headquarters.

My Dear Commander-in-Chief,

Now that Assam has now been transferred from South East Asia Command to the India Command, I feel that I would like to express my great appreciation of the sterling work carried out by the Indian Tea Association Labour Force.

This force has provided a large proportion of the labour required for the construction of the MANIPUR and LEDO Roads, and for almost every airfield and major project in Assam. They have worked cheerfully and well under the most trying conditions and have contributed very materially to our success in BURMA.

The Advance Guard of the Force in early March 1942 consisted of only one planter and 100 labourers from his own estate. By the end of March 1942, the total at MANIPUR Road was 28,500 men, and in October 1942 the Force numbered over 82,000. The strength now still stands at about 67,000 men. When these figures are considered, the magnitude of the effort is apparent.

I would therefore be grateful if you would convey to the Indian Tea Association and to all concerned my thanks for the work they have done; and my appreciation of their very great contribution to the War effort.

Yours sincerely
Sd./LOUIS MOUNTBATTEN

His Excellency,

General Sir Claude Auchinleck,

G.C.B., G.C.I.E., D.S.O., O.B.E., A.D.C.,

Commander-in-Chief,

India.